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No. 8

Giving Greek a New Chance

By RAYMOND V. SCHODER, S.J.

West Baden College, West Baden Springs, Indiana

Greek can be revived in our schools, with more students taking the subject, and taking it longer. We can reinstate Greek as a major educative instrument for the humanizing and cultural deepening of American youth, and bring closer to realization Secretary of Navy Forrestal's plea, made in his graduation address at Princeton, June 22, 1944:

The liberal arts college is one of the foundations upon which our democracy is built. . . . Its curriculum must return, if our Navy experience is any index, to certain basic compulsory courses rather than allowing complete freedom of selection to its students. It must recover its ability to turn out men soundly trained in mathematics and sciences, and in the broadening humanities. . . . I would like to see Greek and Latin restored to their ancient glory.

We can do all this by improving our technique of presentation, so as to show the inherent interest and worth of Greek. In bringing young American minds into more vital contact with real Greek, and at its best, we must let them see for themselves that Greek can educate them in a way that no other subject can do so well, that some subjects cannot do at all. A real taste of Greek will relieve their embitterment from long, seemingly futile, toil with endless grammar and childish exercises; and Greek will then sell itself.

THE CLASSICAL BULLETIN has asked me to describe my new concrete approach to beginners' Greek, aimed at achieving the above mentioned ideals. It is embodied in *A Reading Course in Homeric Greek*, Arranged for a Two Year Program in High School, by Raymond V. Schoder, S.J., and Vincent C. Horrigan, S.J. (Ann Arbor, 1945. \$2.00). The book, already in use by numerous high schools and colleges, has many novel features of plan, construction, and pedagogical technique, all designed to make beginners' Greek more appealing, simple, organized, and educationally effective. After hearing the details of the method, teachers, I hope, will favor me with helpful criticism, and perhaps join ranks with me in using the new "strategy."

Fundamentally, the plan is to enable the beginner much sooner to read Greek, after mastering, in five months of high school or three of college work, the particular paradigm forms, syntax, and vocabulary items which actually occur in the readings constituting the rest of the course. In other words, the aim is not to drill into the beginner all Greek grammar and a mass of basic words in preparation for wide readings later, but to give him early a substantial taste of Greek literature at its best, in Homer's *Odyssey* and *Iliad*, as an eye-opener to the special merits of Greek and as an appetizer for more. As other authors and courses are encountered, the needed grammar and vocabulary items can then and there be added. More interest, more satis-

faction and sense of achievement result. It is also a more psychologically efficient way of learning all these baffling details of the Greek language.

At present, most students cannot or will not take more than two or three years of Greek. Some real Greek, then, right in the first year, should be given them. It is then or never, for so many. If they knew in advance that they could actually learn to read and enjoy Greek rather soon and easily, and caught the enthusiasm of the initiate, a great many more students would be willing to give the subject a try. Our failure to face this fact for so long has been costly. Students are not eager to study mere grammar. They are not convinced that they need the mental discipline of Greek, since for this they feel (and rightly) that their Latin and mathematics are rather adequate. Why spend one, or even two, years in memorizing only rules, forms, and words which they might never use for any commensurate enjoyment and profit in reading what English could not make available to them? Our tradition of over-emphasizing grammar, of making high-school Greek practically only grammar and a labored acquaintance with the *Anabasis* (hardly the best in Greek literature) makes for a bleak and discouraging experience for the student. Interest and good will are stifled, Greek gets a bad reputation, and the tradition's somber aspect drives away many capable students. And alas, most of the students who finish do not know Greek, and read a text with the utmost effort, confusion, and vagueness of comprehension.

Our new method seeks to simplify greatly the grammar-learning problem, so that even those who take only high-school Greek or a year or two as beginners in college can get beyond grammar—can read, with full grammatical comprehension, 1600 lines of Homer: a substantial and unceasingly interesting as well as educative contact with Greek in its glory. Thus, even if they take no more, a relish for Greek is theirs, and they will recommend the subject to others as eminently worthwhile. A much stronger appetite will be aroused for more Greek if at all feasible. The student will also be convinced that Greek is practical, is a mind-sharpener, an illuminator of the inner meaning of English derivatives, the builder of literary background, and, above all, is educative toward a better understanding of human life and a deeper appreciation of human things—of cultural, ideal, and immaterial values.

This methodology would work if the introduction were built around any great author, Plato, for instance, or Sophocles. But, for many reasons, it will work best if the beginnings are centered around Homer, through whom may be achieved all the facets of the ideal proposed above. For Homer is the easiest of great Greek authors. His style is lucidly simple and direct, his thought instantly comprehensible even to young minds, despite its frequent great profundity of import. His dia-

lect also is simpler and easier to master than Attic. As a matter of statistical fact, there are far fewer endings in Homeric declension than in Attic, and Homeric syntax is much less subtle and involved. Homer's vocabulary is vast, but the number of basic words repeated over and over to form the major portion of the text is remarkably small: only 800 words occur more than twice in the 1600 lines of our selections, but they occur so frequently that they are in constant use. The other words are not important enough to merit memorizing by beginners. Hence they are supplied, in our book, under the text where they occur. The memory burden on the student is thus greatly lessened, though he is reading four or five times as much Greek as in current methods. And the grammar-learning is even easier, as 95 per cent of it is seen and mastered in the first semester of first year. This leaves the other three semesters largely free for leisurely, yet extensive, reading of Homer.

Not only does Homer encourage the beginner by being easy to learn and to follow, but he is vastly more appealing than Xenophon or scattered Attic selections can ever be. The adventure stories of the *Odyssey* and *Iliad* delight readers of all times, ages, and interests. They are the most suitable for holding the attention of youths through a blend of excitement, tension, adventure, travel, heroism, pathos, tenderness, vigor, and unsurpassed human interest. Homer is also the most cultural, humanizing of poets, bringing the immature mental powers of the student into bud, or even bloom, under the warm and nourishing influence of the great poet's eager and profound insight into the heart and ways of man.¹ No one will read much Homer in Greek without being mellowed, deepened, and improved in his outlook and social attitudes.

Homer is, besides, "the most poetic of poets," as Plato said (*Rep.* 607A), and the best possible introduction to an understanding of what poetry and great literature are. To develop literary interest and taste in your students, teach them to read Homer in Greek; he will take care of the rest, deepening their understanding of Shakespeare and Vergil or any great writer, his Greek fellows as well, and laying bare the inner laws and essence of literary art.

Furthermore, all subsequent Greek and Latin literature builds on Homer. Later authors assume that their readers know Homer thoroughly. They use his story, ideas, vocabulary in their own work, they presume knowledge of him as background for their thought and literary allusions. It is best, then, to get Homer first—to begin at the beginning—so that one may read later authors as they themselves expected to be read. Classical literature is full of Homer and his influence. Besides, for those who cannot take years of Greek, Homer is the one author they can least afford to miss, the one author from whom they will get the best idea of the splendor and perpetual vitality and significance of Greek culture. As Matthew Arnold said, "Whatever the other authors of classical antiquity have to give us, Homer gives it more than they all."² Homer is, finally, the most famous and universally admired poet in the world, knowledge of whom is taken for granted in educated circles. To borrow E. K. Rand's famous advice to students: "For

those who cannot make the classics their chief study in college, I would give one bit of practical advice: it is to buy, beg, borrow, or steal enough of a knowledge of Greek to read Homer in the original."³

Twenty-five years ago, Clyde Pharr courageously broke with tradition and sought to teach beginners' Greek through Homer. His book, *Homeric Greek*, is a one-year course for college, built around the first book of the *Iliad*. It is a learned work of real value, and is used by numerous colleges. Among its disadvantages is that it overwhelms the beginner with a great mass of grammar and intricate vocabulary, is weighed down with an excess of recondite philology, is poorly organized for steady, planned progress in mastering the language (treating items as they occur in the text, and not in logical order), and is often offensive in its notes for rationalistic misrepresentation of Christianity and divine revelation. It is certainly far too difficult a book for high-school use. Our *Reading Course in Homeric Greek* seeks to make the beginning of Homer easier, more organized, more pedagogically efficient. Such is its aim; but for this aim, it would not have been written. How successfully it realizes its aim is for teachers, students, and experience to determine.

This is the plan. After a selection of 1600 lines of Homer (the main events in the wanderings of Odysseus and the story of Achilles and Hector) on the basis of intrinsic interest, educative possibilities, and correlation with books 1, 2, 4, 6 of the *Aeneid*, we made an exact statistical study of the words, endings, principal parts, and syntax rules occurring in the 1600 lines; the items, in other words, which the student will meet in the readings. Only those words, rules, and forms which occur *three times or oftener* in our selections are assigned for mastery; anything else is explained in a note at the one or two places where it occurs. This allows the student to concentrate on the high-frequency items important for his subsequent reading, and, undistracted and unconfused by a mass of unimportant details, to master these essentials. Nearly all the grammar for the whole course is thus covered in the first semester, and half of the vocabulary for the whole year. In the second semester the main work is reading Homer in specified daily portions, memorizing a few more words each day as they first occur in the text, and adding an occasional detail of grammar. The same is done in second year, which is filled mostly with reading Homer in growing assignments and in memorizing a few new words daily.⁴ There are also three English-to-Greek sentences a day during the three semesters spent on the text, just to keep the student growing in active control over words, forms, and rules seen recently in the Homer passages.

Grammar-learning in first semester is greatly simplified by novel presentation. Only two paradigms, for instance, are needed for covering all third-declension nouns, adjectives, and participles, whereas all other grammars give 34 to 48 distinct ones. This simplification is achieved by a different way of presenting irregularities and by ignoring accent-patterns, which are never taught for reading poetry. Similarly, two mnemonics, *Atarae* and *Dithittet*, instantly reveal the gender of all but twelve

¹ See "Homer—Chief Humanist," *CB* 16.70-71.

² *On Translating Homer* (London, Routledge), p. 66.

³ In the symposium, *On Going to College* (Oxford University Press), p. 27. ⁴ If the course is used for beginners in college, both books can be covered in one year.

third-declension nouns from their genitives, so that gender does not have to be memorized separately (Lesson 27). The whole regular verb is learned, but only those forms of the μ -verbs which will occur more than twice in the readings. This is an enormous saving of time and energy, and is much more efficient, yet it in no way reduces grammatical understanding of the passages actually read. Again, the last three principal parts of verbs are not memorized unless they occur at least two or three times in the readings. Why memorize a thousand forms which will never be used by those who do not go beyond this course, and probably only quite rarely by those who do? Throughout both years there is a *separate lesson* for each day, with a few days left free in each quarter for leeway, review, or special drill. This makes it very easy for the teacher to make assignments; and the students see clearly where they stand each day and what is expected of them. Each lesson in first semester contains twenty to twenty-five drill sentences, half in Greek and half in English, each embodying at least one example of the rules, forms, and words learned in that day's new matter, and the whole methodically reviewing earlier items according to relative importance. New matter is thus learned from *use*, and drilled to *mastery*, then constantly *re-used* in later lessons so that it cannot slip away. When the class comes to read Homer, they find it startlingly easy, because the only forms and syntax which they come across in the text are precisely those which they already know from the first semester; so too, they know most of the words before they take up a new passage. This inspires confidence, a sense of control, and the delight of achievement. It is an effective psychological procedure.

It must not be thought that this method teaches only a truncated and sporadic knowledge of Greek. As a matter of fact, all essential items of Homeric grammar, and of Attic too, (they are 85 per cent identical), come up in these 1600 lines, and hence are learned. But the hardest things in Greek—the irregularities, exceptions, and rare forms—which are just the items that embitter beginners and conspire to prevent mastery or retention of the essential matter, seldom occur here, and therefore are spared the student. Such is our formula for simpler, easier, more pleasant, and *more solid* learning of Greek as a language.

Since the foundation laid in this course is four-fifths complete for the standard Greek authors and 85 per cent identical with Attic from the start, the *transition to Attic*, for those who go on, can be very simple, with the aid of our transition booklet, which will be ready next year. It will contain charts of all ordinary Attic grammar, syntax as well as inflection, with all new or different items in heavy print. The student can thus see at a glance the items not already known, and by concentrating on them for a few days be ready to take up any of the usual Attic authors.

For the first semester, a portion of the sentences is not "made Greek," but *quotations* taken from various authors in all Greek literature, and simply transposed into the Homeric dialect. The student thus has the satisfaction of using his knowledge for reading actual Greek, and, since these quotations contain significant and often striking ideas, the student finds them very interesting.

A major part of each lesson is the Word-Study, giving, explaining, and, where necessary, exemplifying the important English words derived from the day's Greek vocabulary. This has great appeal, and shows a decidedly *practical* benefit of Greek.

Each lesson begins with an impressive quotation from some ancient or modern writer, in admiration of Greek or Homer. These statements by world-famous persons of all classes and centuries create a strong cumulative impression, bringing the student to see that the subject is certainly worth knowing.

To increase the book's appeal and its *liberalizing* force on the student's mind, it is beautifully printed, contains many splendid illustrations, and carries numerous short, inspirational essays on various interesting aspects of general Greek culture, history, literature, art, sculpture, and influence.

As an aid to the teacher, a set of three-minute class vocabulary tests for every other day is supplied free with each book, and there is a very helpful *Teacher's Manual* with specific hints and aids for presenting each lesson, as well as a key to all the exercises.

To improve the student's efficiency in vocabulary learning, a set of light-cardboard sheets comes with each book, containing in two-inch squares every memory vocable in the course, and its meaning on the reverse side. The student may cut out the squares bearing the number of the new lesson he is taking up, and study vocabulary from them, putting the cards with new words, or words from former lessons not yet mastered, on top of his stack, and those already learned on the bottom. In studying, he thus sees first the words which he needs to study most, in complete personal adjustment to the problem.

Teachers who wish to offer comments, suggestions, or to request copies of the book for examination may communicate with me. Better results in Greek-teaching and in the improvement of its status as an educative instrument of special value can be attained only by the support, co-operation, and helpful criticism of those actually engaged in the promotion of Greek studies.

Summer Offerings in Classics at St. Louis University

The Department of Classical Languages of St. Louis University is planning to offer the following courses in the classics:

First Session (May 13 to June 22): Lt S122: Seneca and Pliny.

Second Session (June 24 to August 3): Ar S181: Introduction to Roman Antiquities.—Gk S165: Two Dialogues of Plato.—Lt S101: Composition and Conversation.—Lt S144X: Vergil's Earlier Works.—Lt S238: The Histories of Tacitus.—Lt S284: Latin Palaeography.—Hs S107: Critical Periods in Ancient History.

The "Conferences on Teaching Latin" will again be held this year, with the subject being: "Personalities in High School Latin." The dates for the Conferences are the following Fridays: June 28, July 5, 19, 26.

The theme of the *Seventh Latin Teachers' Institute*, in the morning and afternoon of July 11, will be: "Second Thoughts on the Training of the High School Latin Teacher."

The Classical Bulletin

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Editorial

The editors of THE CLASSICAL BULLETIN take very special pleasure in announcing the publication of *Classical Essays Presented to James A. Kleist, S.J.*¹ The volume is a tribute of esteem to Father Kleist on his seventy-third birthday and was made possible by the co-operation of several of his many friends and admirers throughout the country under the leadership of the editor-in-chief of THE CLASSICAL BULLETIN. That East and West and North and South, and especially the Middle-West, the chief scene of Father Kleist's pedagogical and scholarly labors during the past forty years, are duly represented in this *Festschrift*, becomes evident by the mere recital of the principal contributors' names. Walter R. Agard, William H. Alexander, Norman J. DeWitt, Charles C. Mierow, Clyde Murley, John A. Scott, Francis A. Sullivan, S.J.—these are names that any classical scholar would be proud to see inscribed on a birthday volume presented to himself. Our only regret is that Professor Rand's untimely death and Professor Lane Cooper's uncertain health made it impossible for these two outstanding lights of American classical learning, both warm friends of Father Kleist, to contribute to this *testimonium amoris*. We know that others would have been eager to contribute, had the general editor found it possible to include an indefinite number of papers.

The subject matter of the studies shows a wide range of interests. In this connection it is a point worth noting that in approaching the contributors the general editor had suggested that they choose a topic for their contribution in which Father Kleist had manifested to them some special interest. The broad range of subjects which they actually chose is thus a proof, if such were needed, of the great breadth of Father Kleist's own interests. Christian as well as pagan antiquity is represented in the volume. There are studies centering about religion, poetry, war, adventure. There is literary criticism, as well as textual, historical, and archaeological scholarship. Of the classical writers Homer, Plato, Caesar, Virgil, Horace, St. Jerome come in for a special share of attention. All in all, this is a representative volume by representative scholars, presented to a representative classical student and teacher and true Christian gentleman. *Ad multos annos vivat, valeat, floreat* is the sincere wish and prayer of the editors of THE CLASSICAL BULLETIN (and of its readers too, we are sure) on this happy occasion. After all, THE CLASSICAL BUL-

¹ Edited, with Introduction, by Richard E. Arnold, S.J. St. Louis, *The Classical Bulletin*, 1946.

LETIN in its present form owes its origin, development, and success, no less than its distinctive character, to the enthusiasm, the unremitting and unselfish industry of Father Kleist. May his spirit ever continue to inform its pages!

F.A.P.

Musical Settings of Horatian Odes

By JOHN G. HACKER, S.J.

Loyola College, Baltimore, Maryland

The value of a piece of vocal music is determined by the aptness with which it expresses the words. But, in appraising the compositions presented here, we must attend to another element, the accord of the musical rhythm with the verse-rhythm. The long and the short syllables of the text are expressed by strictly corresponding long and short musical notes. Besides, the phrase-rhythm is carefully observed.

The music to which most of us are accustomed is regular in its movement. Its recurrence of a definite number of musical beats to the measure does not suit the much more variable rhythm of the Horatian verse-forms. Hence we must have recourse to a freer style of music, a style more like Gregorian Chant, which has a greater rhythmical freedom.

To compose in such a style is difficult, and is attempted rather seldom. Nearly all the musical settings of Horatian Odes which have come to my notice pay little or no attention to the verse-rhythm, but treat the text in a sort of rhetorical fashion, without much regard for the meter. A typical example of the usual procedure is found in the well-known setting of the "Integer Vitae" by Fleming. Here we find the following musical rhythm:

—'—|—'—|—'—|—'—|—'—

But the metrical lilt of this Sapphic verse is as follows:

—'—|—'—|—'—|—'—|—'—

Quite a difference, especially if we note also the phrase-rhythm!

Even if it be true that the Romans only recited their odes and that they did not conceive them also as forms of music and of the dance, as the Greeks did, nevertheless, we can hardly assume that the Roman poets borrowed such elaborate verse-forms from the Greeks without intending that their musical lilt should be clearly brought out, even in mere recitation. At any rate, unless these finer points are duly attended to, some exquisite and hidden beauties of verse-rhythm will escape us.

Of the following short compositions the first three are to be sung in unison, the fourth by a chorus of four men's voices. The first is a mournful ode in Asclepiadean meter, addressed to Vergil upon the death of a mutual friend, Quintilius Varus. The second is the Sapphic "Integer Vitae," a simple reflective ode with a humorous tinge of bravado. The third is a rollicking song of exultation over the defeat and death of Rome's formidable foe, Cleopatra; the meter is Alcaic. The fourth is a solemn prayer for Vergil, as he was setting out for Greece; the meter is another form of Asclepiadean, but less somber than that of the first selection.

MUSICAL SETTINGS OF HORATIAN ODES
WITH STRICT OBSERVANCE OF THE METRICAL QUANTITY

by John G. Hacker, S.J.
Loyola College, Baltimore.

A. Asclepiadean. (I, 24)

Mournfully.

Quis de-si-de-ri-o sit pu-dor aut mo-dus Tam ca-ri ca-pi-tis? prae-ci-pe
lu-gu-bres Can-tus, Mel-po-me-ne, cui li-qui-dam Pater Vocem cum qithara dedit.

B. Sapphic. (I, 22)

In-te-ger vi-tae sce-le-ris-que pu-rus Non e-get Mau-ri ja-cu-lis neque arcu
Nec ve-ne-na-tis gra-vi-da sa-git-tis, Fus-ce, pha-re-tra.

C. Alcaic. (I, 36)

Joyfully.

Nunc est bi-ben-dum, nunc pe-de li-be-ro Pulsan-da tel-lus, nunc Sali-a-ribus
Or-na-re pul-vi-nar de-o-rum Tem-pus e-rat da-pi-bus, so-da-les.

(over)

(D.) For 4 Men's Voices:

HORACE'S PRAYER FOR VERGIL (Odes, I, 3).

J.G.Hacker, S.J.

Solemnly.

f Sic te di-va po-tens Cypri, Sic fra-tres He-le-nae, lu-ci-da si-de-ra,

stringendo

Ven-to-rum-que re-gat Pa-ter, Ob-strictis a-li-is prae-ter I-a-py-ga,

allargando

a tempo

mf Na-vis, quae ti-bi cre-di-tum De-bes Ver-gi-li-um, Fi-ni-bus At-ti-cis

Red-das in-co-lu-mem, pre-cor, Et ser-ves, et ser-ves a-ni-mae, a-ni-mae

rit.

di-mi-di-um me-ae.

Medea. Freely Adapted from the *Medea* of Euripides by Robinson Jeffers. New York, Random House, 1946. Pp. 107. \$2.50.

The *Medea* of Euripides needs no introduction to the classicist. It is a stirring psychological and emotional portrayal of what finally happens to the abortive union between Medea and Jason, a union which ends in their destruction but not in their death.

Robinson Jeffers has freely adapted the play in verse for modern presentation on the stage. I think he has done well. It is dedicated to Judith Anderson who will

play the title role in its dramatic presentation this year.

There has been no substantial change in the action of the play. The longer speeches have been changed and shortened. The chorus is cared for by the individual Corinthian women. Mr. Jeffers divided his version of the *Medea* into two acts, obviously to break up the length for modern presentation.

The lovers of Euripides and the followers of Mr. Jeffers may take his cue and use this new and well-printed version, not only for reading, but for dramatization on a smaller scale during the coming year.

J.A.F.

"Pale Fear Gat Hold of Me"

BY ELLENOR SWALLOW
Barnard College, Columbia University

One does not feel that Odysseus increases in stature by his experience in the world of the dead as Aeneas obviously does, and this feeling arises partly because the poet seems to take his hero not altogether seriously. Odysseus' wanderings are a matter of pure enjoyment both for poet and for audience; it is hardly intended that we should meditate deeply upon them.

Such an assessment of the poet's purpose, however, is not meant to discount the many passages revealing deep insight into character or tender feeling for human sorrows. The whole Hades episode itself is full of the sense of man's helplessness. Gloom descends from the first reference to the other world when Circe gives instructions to Odysseus to visit "the dwelling of Hades and of dread Persephone" (*Od.* 10.490 ff.), and although he had just passed a lazy and pleasurable year with the seductive nymph recuperating from woes of land and sea, at the news of another labor still to be endured he is overcome,² for he remembers all the past toils, and the year of ease is, as it were, wiped out. Because he knows what his comrades will think, he does not tell them until they are starting for the ships ἐρχομένοισι δὲ τοῖσιν, 10.561), and they, upon hearing this, immediately sit down in their tracks and weep. "Howbeit no help came of their weeping" (566-567). This is poor humanity naked and touchingly unashamed.

One thing in the ritual of offerings to the shades emphasizes the grimness, namely, the bald statement that the shades drink the blood; nowhere else is it expressed quite so plainly as that nor pictured quite so clearly; how clearly, we realize better when even the shade of the gentle and loving Anticleia "drank the dark blood" (11.153). This is part of the tragedy of death: the "heart" has gone out of man.

But these things are a matter of "atmosphere." It is what Odysseus sees and hears regarding those who once have lived that produces the real sense of tragic pathos. Why should Anticleia have had to die of grief in waiting for her son's return? That return was destined to be accomplished. Why was Agamemnon murdered just as he was getting home? He had, with tragic irony, so long looked forward to that. Why was Achilles great in his strength and valorous deeds? Was it all for this: "Rather would I live on the ground as the hireling of another. . . ." (11.489 ff.)? The words are all the more tragic inasmuch as he is φέρτατ' Ἀχαιῶν. Death does not even give one a chance to right what went wrong in life, and so forever Ajax and Odysseus must remain parted by a petty squabble. Odysseus, still alive, knows now for a moment that it was petty, but it is too late. Ajax is

¹ *Odyssey* 11.43 (with *on* for *of*) and 634. This translation, as in all the quotations from the *Odyssey*, is from Butcher and Lang's translation; and all are reprinted by permission of The Macmillan Co., publishers. For the purpose of this discussion the whole book is accepted as handed down to us, inasmuch as this would seem to be the text which was before Virgil with whom the comparison is being made. Also, whatever may be the various theories of authorship, the poet has here been called Homer for convenient reference.

² "I wept as I sat upon the bed, and my soul had no more care to live and to see the sunlight. But when I had my fill of weeping and grovelling. . ." (10.497-499). This is not just grief, it is prostration.

a shade. In sum, all is joyless, all is inevitable.

The phantom of Heracles simply shows the repeated pattern: man's portion in life comes to him, will he, nill he, first to one individual and then to another; and much of it is hard. So Heracles departs and Odysseus goes on with his tale. But what is his tale?

Yea and I should have seen the men of old whom I was fain to look on, Theseus and Peirithous, renowned children of the gods. But ere that might be the myriad tribes of the dead thronged up together with wondrous clamour: and pale fear gat hold of me [—Why so, now that he has seen so much?—For this:] lest the high goddess Persephone should send me the head of the Gorgon, that dread monster, from out of Hades. (11.630-637)

Surely this is not a serious ending; this is Homer's personal touch, even if put in the mouth of Odysseus. He is not only a good story-teller but he has thoroughly enjoyed the spellbinding that he knows has been accomplished. And he breaks the spell with a well-timed hit: "Oh," Odysseus suddenly remembers, "I don't want to be turned into stone,"—and thereupon loses all interest in the after-life! The great hero has suddenly become the little boy who rang a doorbell, and did not expect it to be answered. Only now do we remember a number of casual touches which well fit with this comic twist.

When the hero first comes in his swift ship to the shrouded Cimmerian land and the pit with its drink-offerings to the dead and its black victims, and while he waits for the prayers and offerings to take effect, Elpenor appears. He is not yet thoroughly committed to death because he has not been buried. Odysseus may have "wept and had compassion on him" in his heart, but what was the form of address upon his tongue?

Elpenor, how hast thou come beneath the darkness and the shadow? Thou hast come fleetest on foot than I in my black ship. (11.57-58)

Our reaction is one of almost comic surprise, though we hardly have time to indulge it before we come to the long serious passages which cover the promise of burial to Elpenor, the discovery of Anticleia's death, and the arrival and prophecy of Teiresias.

Odysseus does not really pay much attention to the prophecy, the alleged cause of his descent to the shades: "Teiresias," he says, "all these threads, methinks, the gods themselves have spun. But, come, declare me this. . ." (11.139-140), and he finds out how he may satisfy his curiosity about the various dead. Perhaps it was just as well that Circe gave him a better prophecy later on, and in greater detail!

The Catalogue of Fair Women, while indifferent in "atmosphere" and perhaps a little monotonous, seems to be really a part of this lighter side. It represents Odysseus πολύμητις: Nausicaa had told him, in effect (6.310),³ that it was her mother who ruled the household, and now he weaves the first part of his underworld story to catch Arete's attention. With what success! "What think you of this man," she says, "for comeliness and stature, and within for wisdom of heart? . . . stint not these your gifts for one that stands in such sore need of them" (11.336 ff.). No doubt this, in the main, is clever characterization, but through it the poet may well be smiling a little. Yet he does so without loss of dignity or of effect, for in the tale which follows, through accumulated pathos he makes us forget that there has

³ So also Athene in even plainer terms, 7.60-70.

been a break at all in the narrative, and, further, we give full credence to it all.

But how is he to have done with this and get back to the world of the living and less insecure topics, the plain tale of Odysseus' homecoming and vengeance? There is no way, for his purposes, without some anti-climax. But he does not *fall* into anti-climax, rather he *uses* it with tongue in cheek and sparkle in his eye: "I was afraid that I might see the Gorgon's head."

Contrast the situation in the *Aeneid*. Virgil has created an atmosphere of solemn exultation and sober responsibility. The Sixth *Aeneid* is filled with the sense of a great mission to which all that is comfortable, all that might have been easy, is sacrificed. There is no laughter here, not even a genial wink at any of Hades' monsters. The somberness has been achieved by traditional ceremonies, figures and myths associated with the world of the dead, now mingled with the concepts of formal philosophy. The roster of Roman greatness which is the special purpose of the book provides a solid basis of actuality and an intense dignity of theme. Thus, unlike Homer, Virgil has committed himself too far and too fully to retreat (even had he so desired). Instead, by taking his hero in silence out through the gate of false dreams he reminds us how unfathomable is Nature and Man, and at the same time, for the poem itself, implants the faith that Aeneas will go on to success, and his race after him:

Sunt geminae somni portae quarum altera fertur
cornea qua veris facilis datur exitus umbris,
altera candenti perfecta nitens elephanto,
sed falsa ad caelum mittunt insomnia manes.
his ibi tum natum Anchises unaque Sibyllam
prosequitur dictis portaque emittit eburna.
ille viam secat ad navis sociosque revisit.
(Aen. 6.893-899)⁴

The very caution of it has a brooding quality and deepens the reader's conviction.

This contrast between the *Odyssey* and the *Aeneid* results from more than merely the long gap between the times in which the two poets lived, or from the difference in their cultural backgrounds, or even in the underlying themes on which they have severally embarked, although one is at first tempted to account for it in this way. The light gaiety was just as possible in Virgil's day as in Homer's. Horace, for example, would undoubtedly have chosen this method had he been writing epic and taking his hero to the underworld,⁵ the more particularly, perhaps, were he eager to emphasize its importance. But then Horace knew that he was not the man to write a national epic; he had not the gravity. The gravity and meditation belong to Virgil, and in epic poetry these qualities are what set him apart from the Homeric poet,

⁴ In passing it seems well to note an explanation offered me in discussion of this passage by Professor W. H. Alexander of the University of California. There are only the two gates of exit from the underworld, the one, of horn, for things genuinely of the spirit world, *verae umbrae*; the other, of ivory, normally for false dreams. Now Aeneas and the Sibyl are very much flesh and blood and therefore cannot classify with the *verae umbrae*. There is, then, no alternative, since they are not truly of the spirit world and must leave it, but to send them out with false dreams and anything else foreign to the realm of shades. The use of this gate does not make them false dreams but distinguishes them from true shades. This seems a simpler approach to the solution than is usual, and may have been so obvious to the poet that he did not dream of clarifying it further.

⁵ Cf. *Odes* 1.22; 2.13 (inverted order here) for a similar off-hand manner of escaping from a possibly serious subject.

of whose sunshine and easy equanimity this ending to *Odyssey* 11 is one of the most sparkling examples.

The Catholic Classical Association of Greater New York has published the first number of *Folia: Studies in the Christian Perpetuation of the Classics*, under the editorship of Sister Mary Liguori, R.D.C. With articles by Brother Alban, F.S.C., Alfons A. Nehring, Thomas Michels, O.S.B., and Rudolph Arbesmann, O.S.A., it demonstrates fully its aims as formulated:

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For the moody teacher Juvencius has this advice:

Plurimi non eundem agendi cum discipulis modum tenent:
hodie graves ac serii, cras hilares et remissi; modo severi et
inexorabiles, alias placabiles et benigni. Haec illa scilicet
inaequalitas omnia corrumpit, et ingeniis puerilibus perturbandis,
et ad immodestiam convertendis, opportuna est. (*Ratio Discendi
et Docendi*).

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Classical Essays

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<i>St. Jerome</i>	<i>Plato</i>
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